

8.0 MITIGATION PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

Existing mitigation activities include current mitigation programs and activities that are being implemented by county, state and federal agencies within Boise County. Prioritization of Hazards and Mitigation Goals are in accordance with the stated objectives, specifically protection of life, property and values at risk. Prioritized recommendations are provided to the Boise County Commissioners.

The mitigation proposals are also included in the Wildfire Mitigation Action Items Matrix (Table ES1) and explained in Section 7, Mitigation Strategy and Implementation.

8.1 Local Programs

Boise County residents are served by a variety of local fire districts and departments as well as by IDL, U.S. Forest Service and BLM. The Boise County Fire Fighters Association is an organization that promotes partnerships and information sharing among the various fire service providers in the County. This association meets on a regular basis to ensure coordination of resources. A county-wide needs assessment of the various Volunteer and Rural Departments has been coordinated by the State of Idaho. Priorities for Boise County departments are: Training, Communications, Personnel Protective Equipment, and Apparatus (water tenders distributed at different areas of the county, engines).

Fire personnel throughout the county have taken the lead in providing many useful and educational services to Boise County residents, such as:

- Presenting fire safety education to school, church and civic groups;
- Coordinating educational programs with other agencies;
- Participating in or sponsoring local community events that focus on fire information and prevention.

8.2 County Codes

- Boise County Planning and Zoning Ordinance No. 2001-2 established road standards, conditions of design and construction. This ordinance contains the table of design requirements for construction of various road service classes in Boise County.
- Boise County Planning and Zoning “Fire Protection Guidelines For Residential Development In The Urban-Wildland Interface.”

8.3 State (IDL) Programs

- Provides education to property owners about fire hazards in forestland-urban interface areas.
- Manages the Hazardous Fuels Reduction Program to assist landowners or counties with grant funds for reduction of hazardous fuels.
- Manages the Forest Stewardship program, which assists landowners in forest and fire planning.
- Provides suppression training and resources as requested.
- Declares fire closures when wildfire danger ratings and conditions require.

8.4 Federal Programs

The role of the federal land managing agencies in Boise County is focused on reducing fuel hazards on the lands they administer. They also provide prevention and education programs, provide technical and financial assistance and develop agreements and partnerships with other agencies and private stakeholders in an effort to provide for safer communities within the wildlands. Some of the programs provide grants to rural fire districts within the county, which has enhanced the current operations, and will continue to do so within the foreseeable future.

Fire Suppression Assistance Grants may be provided to a state with an approved hazard mitigation plan. These grants are provided to protect life and improved property. The grant may include funds for training, equipment, supplies, and personnel.

8.5 National Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Protection Program

Federal agencies can use the National Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Protection Program to focus on wildland/urban interface fire protection issues and actions. The Western Governors' Association (WGA) uses this program to involve state agencies, as well as local and private stakeholders.

8.6 Prescribed Burning/Mechanical/Biological Treatment

Within Boise County, the decline in the timber industry, coupled with historical fire exclusion has resulted in a backlog of fuel accumulation. As a result, new ignitions can move more quickly and intensely. Prescribed burning and/or mechanical treatment are the most efficient methods to mitigate these fuels. Biological treatment (ungulate grazing) of some fuels has also been utilized with success in Boise County and other areas of Idaho.

8.7 Firewise

Firewise is a program developed within the National Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Protection Program. It is administered through the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG), with the intention of educating planners and decision makers at the local level. Firewise offers online wildfire protection information and checklists, as well as listings of other publications, videos, and conferences. Future developments in Boise County that would be planned and coordinated as a "firewise" community would likely be well received by potential home buyers.